

CAMP'S BIG OAKS FARM MARKET  
New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail  
South Delsea Drive (State Route 47)  
Port Elizabeth  
Cumberland County  
New Jersey

HABS NO. NJ-997

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 97127  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CAMP'S BIG OAKS FARM MARKET

HABS No. NJ-997

Location: South Delsea Drive (Route 47), Port Elizabeth, Cumberland County, New Jersey

Owner/Occupant: Kenneth and Ruth Camp.

Significance: The market, an inexpensive and utilitarian structure, is representative of many such roadside stands found along the shore routes such as Routes 49 and 47. Since at least the turn of the century, farm-grown produce has been sold to travelers on a seasonal basis.

Description: This utilitarian rectangular structure is essentially three-sided, with an open east/front facade. The shed roof angles downward to the rear of the building; it is clad with corrugated metal. Essentially three bays long and one pile deep, the frame building is set on poured concrete. The front facade facing the road is "closed" after business hours by pulling down metal doors that are locked in place. There are also doors on the north and west facades of the building; the former is glazed and set in a simple surround. Two sash windows are set in simple surrounds, hinged, and open upward.

Inside, the building is one open room with a service area and counter where vegetables and fruits are displayed. Behind the counter is space for the cashier, cash register, bags, and other business needs.

HISTORY: Probably constructed about 1940. With the advent of the automobile in the first decades of the twentieth century, South Jersey became the largest truck-farming area in the state. Truck farmers grew many of same vegetables and fruits--especially tomatoes--beans, onions, green peppers, fall lettuce, and berries as had their ancestors in the nineteenth century. Due to South Jersey's proximity to Philadelphia, much of it was exported via the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad; some farmers, however, continued to transport by wagon. Scows and barges carried tomatoes to Baltimore canneries and returned with stable manure for fertilizer; dairy products were also shipped to Philadelphia and the seashore resorts. This method of transportation eventually became illegal when sanitation codes were made stricter.

Besides commercial sales, this produce was sold locally from roadside stands as early as the 1920s. Truck farmers, such as Kenneth Camp's father, Hise Camp, started a temporary roadside stand that later developed into a full-time business. Roadside markets or stands continue to be a common sight in the rural areas of South Jersey today, especially along main roads such as Route 49, Route 47, and Buckshutem Road. They are usually affiliated with nearby farms, orchards, or greenhouses that are next to the roadside stand, which in turn is located in front of the farmhouse. These stands take a handful of definable forms: the temporary pole-shed type of structure with modes and movable shelving; a gable- or shed-roof building that is largely open on the front facade, of which Camp's Big Oaks Farm Market is an example; or is enclosed but features a continuous shed roof; and a structure like the aforementioned, with rambling additions of flat or slightly sloped roofs supported by plain posts. In some cases, the roof is extended off the side facades, and a new "exterior" is created by attaching chicken wire to the roof supports; floors in most are poured concrete. While the older roadside stands are made of wood--most often painted white--more modern examples are constructed of corrugated metal. There are several produce stands along Route 49 near Shiloh and Bridgeton: permanent, frame, gable-roof structures that are open all year.

Set along the west side of Route 47 in Port Elizabeth, Camp's Big Oak Farm Market is easily accessed by vacationers en route to the shore, as well as everyday travelers. Located along the east bank of the Maurice River, the farmland behind the farm market and house is ideal for growing truck crops.

SOURCES:

Camp, Ruth. Port Elizabeth, New Jersey. Phone Interview. 13 July 1990.

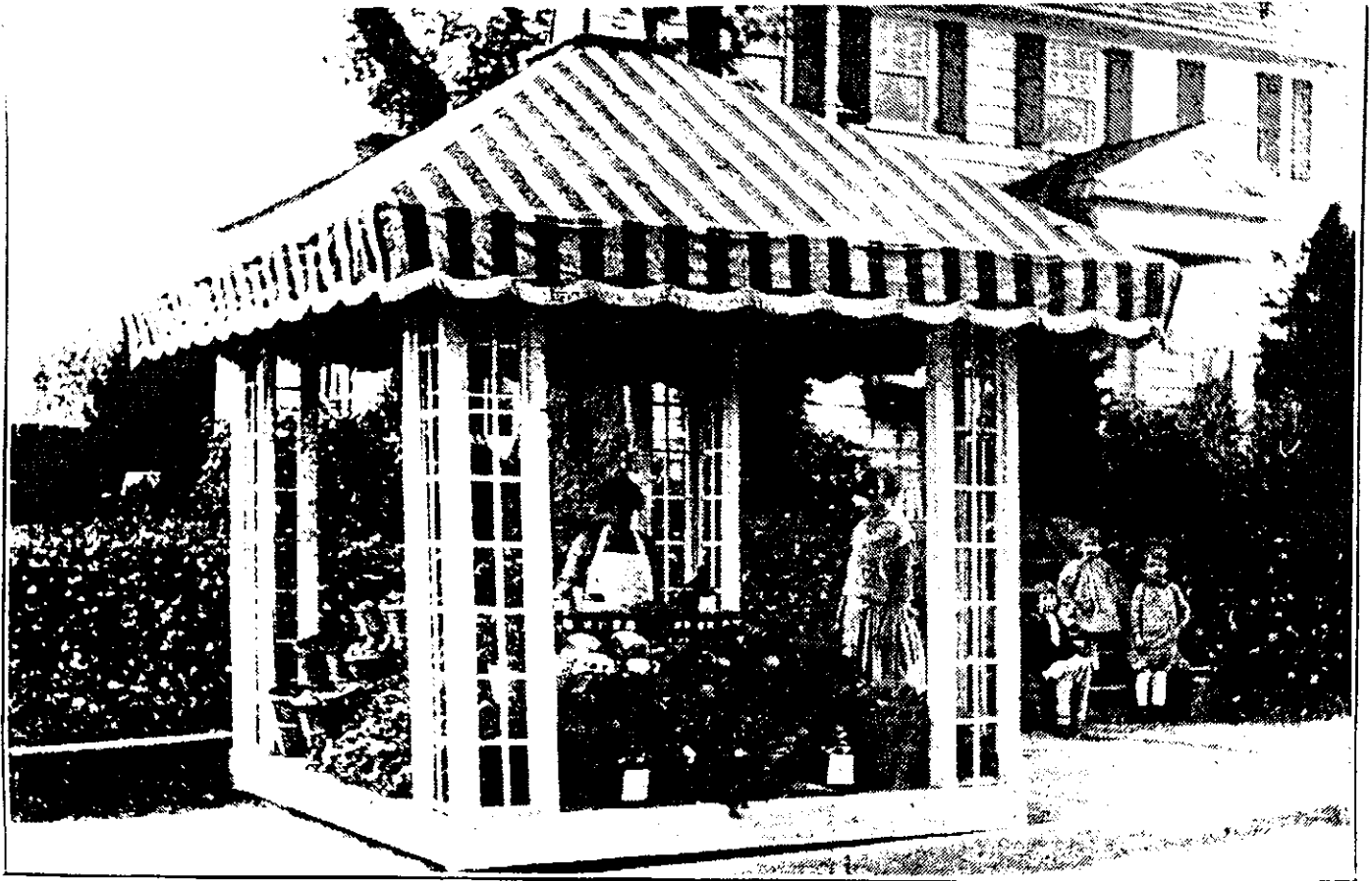
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Sebold, Kimberly, and Sara Amy Leach. Historic Themes and Resources within the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail: Southern New Jersey and the Delaware Bay. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991.

U.S. Department of Agriculture. Office of the Secretary. Systems of Renting Truck Farms in South-Western New Jersey, by Howard A. Turner. Professional Paper Bulletin No. 411. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1916.

Wilson, Harold F. The Jersey Shore. Vols. 1-3. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1953.

PROJECT INFORMATION: The project was sponsored by the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail (NJCHT) of the National Park Service, Janet Wolf, director. The documentation was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Robert Kapsch, chief, under the direction of Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian. The project was completed during summer 1992. The project historian was Kimberly R. Sebold (University of Delaware). The photography was produced by David Ames, University of Delaware, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering.



### ROADSIDE MARKET, FAIRTON

This roadside market in Fairton (early 20th century) is representative of similar stands which have existed in New Jersey since the 1920s.

Parsons, Floyd W., ed. New Jersey: Life, Industries and Resources of a Great State.  
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